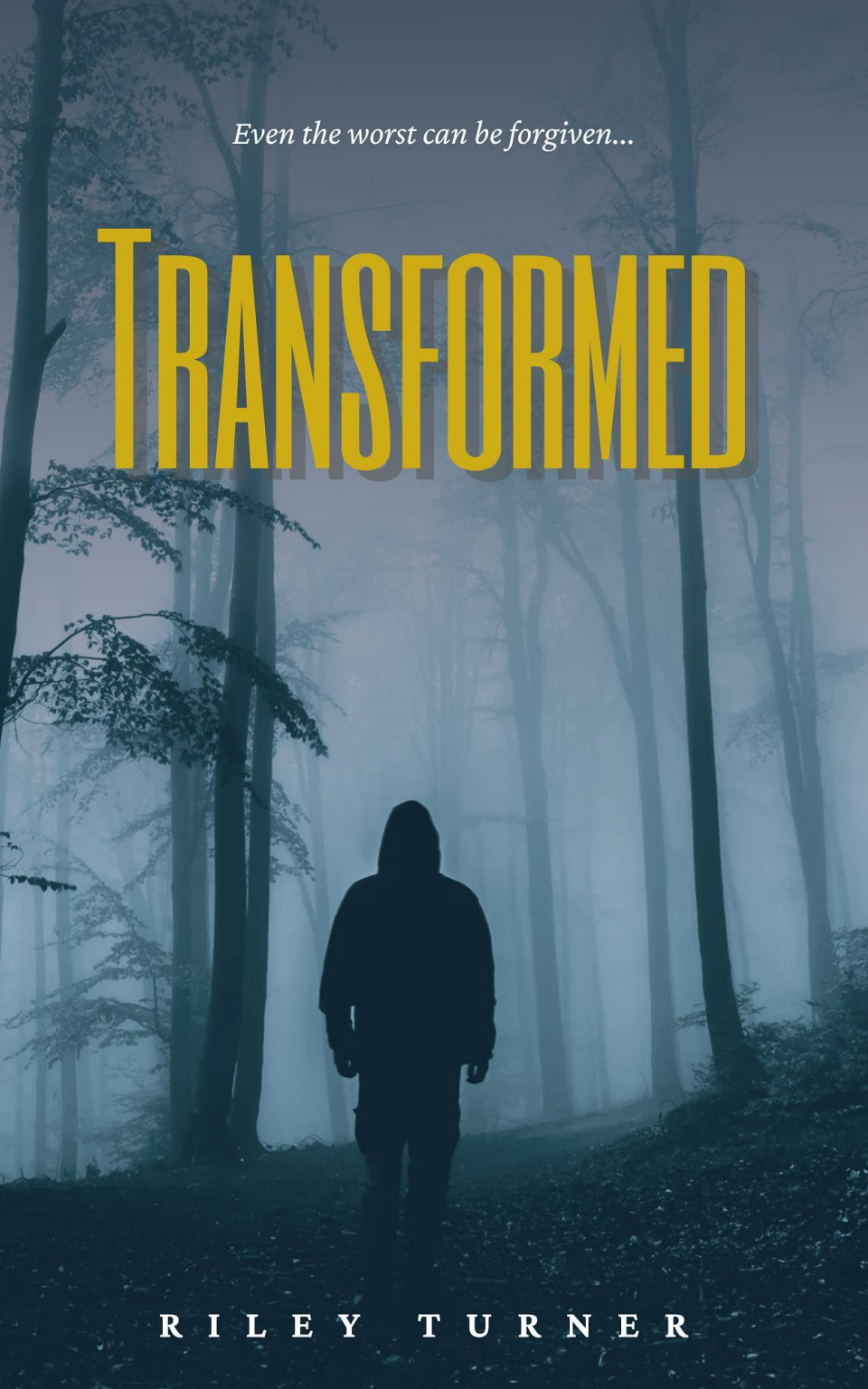
Even the worst can be forgiven...
TRANSFORMED
RILEY TURNER

RILEY TURNER

Transformed

Even the worst can be forgiven

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I

Part One

Resisting Arrest

1

Chapter 1

Cold Wings

Jack Rourke is a very bad man. He has had relationship problems in the past, like cheating on his wives and having 10 wives, without any of them knowing of the others.

Jack was hungry, but didn't want to spend money. He decided to sneak into a gas station and steal some hot wings. He began to drive over to the gas station, gun loaded, everything he needed in case he was caught.

The parking spots were full.

"Shoot, always gotta be full," Jack whispered angrily to himself, jaws clenched.

He stepped out, and the car door creaked as he shut it. He grimaced at the sound. It was too loud. It reminded him of how the wife who lived in his basement was loud. His main wife almost found out about his secret because of this.

He stepped into the store slowly, and he decided it would be

better if, instead of sneaking in, he acted normal, and would steal the wings if they had any ready. But if they didn't have any ready—well, he didn't know what to do. He just had to hope that they had some ready.

He opened the door and walked in, trying not to look suspicious. It reminded him of one of his other wives—how she would always look like she was hiding something when she wasn't.

"Hello!" the cashier said, with a smile and enthusiasm.

"Oh, hi," Jack said, without much enthusiasm.

Thankfully, the wings were in an area out of view from the cashier. He grabbed the wings, and they were pretty cold.

Those lousy "heaters" these stores have, thought Jack.

The wings were as cold as he was. He had been in the newspapers a few times for shoplifting and armed robbery. Everyone kinda feared him, especially gas stations and banks in town. Thankfully, he was smart enough to drive somewhere else—a place nearby that didn't know his criminal record that well.

He grabbed the wings and realized that he had no choice but to either hide the wings in his pocket (which would mess up his expensive jeans) or use his gun and possibly get another prison sentence. He chose dirty pants.

As he was about to walk out, the cashier noticed sauce dripping from his pocket, which appeared to have a square container in it.

"Hey, you're stealing!" she screamed, as she began to dial 9-1-1.

Jack got his gun out.

"If you even lay a finger on that phone, I'll blow your brains out!" exclaimed Jack.

He saw the fear in the young lady's eyes and chuckled. He

exited the store with the wings and saw that his car had been stolen.

"Wait, how long was I planning and daydreaming about my wives in there?" Jack whispered to himself.

He was in there for about an hour. He had to walk. He needed to stall while he ate. He couldn't kill the lady—that would get him a life or death sentence. He would go to jail for less time if he had held her at gunpoint.

He ran back into the store, right before she dialed 9-1-1. He grabbed and pulled his gun back out, pointing it at the lady.

"You're gonna sit here and let me eat my wings. Once I go back there and make you fix some fresh wings—these are colder than the North Pole!" exclaimed Jack.

He pointed the gun at the lady as she got the raw wings out of the freezer and put them in the oven.

To pass the time, Jack started a conversation with the lady.

"So, why are gas station wings always so cold?"

The lady replied, "To be honest, they are kinda cold. My boss just makes me keep the heater at 80° Fahrenheit because *she* likes them cold. I know, she sucks."

After a few minutes, the wings were done. She then had to pour the sauce onto the wings, and they would be done. After she did that, she fearfully gave him the wings.

"Now, LET ME EAT HERE!!!" ordered Jack.

He sat down on the floor and started eating. He was a nasty eater, chewing with his mouth open and licking his fingers. The lady looked on in disgust.

When he finished, he said, "These wings were good, thanks!" to the lady.

When he left, the lady immediately called 9-1-1.

"9-1-1, what's your emergency?"

"Yes, a man just held me at gunpoint and forced me to make hot wings at this gas station."

"Did you get the identity of the person, ma'am?"

"No, but he was a chubby white man."

"Chubby white man, hmm... Ma'am, we think we know who you're talking about. We are on our way."

The police arrived on the scene and noticed Jack hiding behind the store. They got out of their cars and cornered him.

2

Chapter 2

The Shootout

Jack slowly reached for his gun with his left hand, and his right hand was up. The police shot his left arm when they saw him reaching.

"Freeze, you've terrorized these gas stations for the last time," said one of the officers.

"Oh, so you wanna play that game, huh?" replied Jack, while holding his left arm in pain.

He grabbed his gun and began shooting. The police dodged every shot.

"And, that's attempted murder toward a cop. Write that down on the list of charges, mate," said Finny to Timmy.

The cops' names were Jimmy, Finny, and Timmy. Timmy had the list of charges.

Jack aimed and shot at the list of charges, but ended up missing and shooting at Timmy's heart. The other two cops

were shocked and sad.

"Come on, mate, don't leave us."

"Yeah, please," the two other cops said.

"It was an honor working with y'all," were Timmy's last words.

The two other cops had known him for a long time. They arrested murderers together, caught thieves together, and were all best friends in high school. The cops were out for blood, for Jack's blood.

The cops began shooting at Jack repeatedly, but Jack dodged all of the bullets. Jack began to run and hid behind a car—the lady's car (the lady still gets paid for staying in the store all night).

"Come out here, you little Timmy-killer!" exclaimed Jimmy.

"Yeah," said Finny.

Jack knew he was gonna get life in prison if he got caught. If you killed one person, you would get a death sentence. If you killed 2 or more people, you would get life in prison. He heard that death row was terrible, and it lasted years. At least he got to socialize for a life sentence. He had to kill another cop.

Jack was in hot water right now, and all over some cold hot wings. He had to steal the lady's car and drive away. It wouldn't matter; he had nothing to lose now. He tried to open the car door, but it was locked. He had to shoot the windows.

Jack was about to shoot the window, but realized he needed the key to crank up the car. When the cops weren't looking, he snuck into the store, and once again held the lady at gunpoint.

"Give me your car keys!" ordered Jack.

The lady gave him her keys fearfully.

He opened the car door and cranked up the car, and drove away. He was able to stay unnoticed for a few seconds before the

cops noticed his stolen car. The cops got in their car and started chasing Jack.

Jack looked out the window and shot a few times at the car. He managed to shoot the beeping bumper. The cops knew they were against a dangerous man, so they called for backup.

"Um, we need backup."

"How much?"

"A lot, this dude just killed my friend."

"Alright, we sent some backup."

"Thank you."

Jack had to buy some time. He decided to drive over to the abandoned bookstore downtown. He had to lose the cops first.

Jack drove until he made it to the "dead zone," no cellphone service. There were a lot of trees. He drove into the woods, and his car broke down. He ran into the woods, unseen by the police.

They began a search for the man and brought multiple airplanes, dogs, and men.

3

Chapter 3

The Start of Something New

3 years earlier...

Jack was a skinny, well-rounded man who loved everyone in his neighborhood. He was visiting a donut shop downtown because he was hungry. It was there he saw Maria, a pretty, skinny woman. He instantly fell in love with her.

"Yes, I would like a chocolate-covered donut with sprinkles, please," said Maria. She then sat down at a table to wait for her donut.

"Uh, yes, can I have the 'all-new brownie batter-covered donut,' please?" asked Jack to the donut man. Jack decided to sit down at the same table as Maria. They both greeted each other awkwardly.

Maria was trying to hide it, but Jack knew she also had feelings

for him.

"I love you," said both of them to each other.

"Jinx." They both chuckled.

"So, where are you from?" asked Maria.

"Edge of town."

"Oh, cool."

"So, do you like sports?"

"YES, I'm on the tennis team!"

"REALLY? Wow."

"Yep, they say I'm the best player on the team."

"I really like hot wings and football."

"Wow, cool."

"Here are your donuts," said the waiter, setting the donuts down.

They ate the donuts and enjoyed them.

"Well, what's your number? I like you, uhh..."

"Jack. The name's Jack, and 555-1212."

"Cool."

They leaned over to kiss and decided that they weren't ready yet.

4

Chapter 4

The Woods

Jack awoke in the middle of the forest. He had been sleeping for a few hours now, and the police had been searching for him just as long.

I miss my first wife, thought Jack. He could still hear her voice — soft, like wind chimes — warning him not to make dumb decisions. His dream made him feel guilty, but not enough to turn himself in. He didn't even know where he was; all he could remember was running in the woods and then passing out from exhaustion.

He got up, still tired and not remembering much.

Oh, right! thought Jack as he remembered. He remembered how he was really craving some hot wings, so he stole some, then he shot a police officer and resisted arrest. That would get him life in prison. He had nothing to lose now, and all over some hot wings. He realized that the whole police department was on

him now.

Jack got up slowly and painfully. His whole body was sore. The mosquitoes were all over him.

He had a memory of his wife when he got home from their wedding. She had told him:

"Whatever you do, don't harden your heart. Stay the same God-loving man you have always been. Promise that."

"I promise," replied Jack, in his memory.

He had broken his promise.

He heard a barking noise. It was loud, and he could hear it from his right ear. Jack ran, climbed up a tree, and hid inside the leaves. He saw a cop. The dog was sniffing the area he had been standing in.

"You smell him, boy," said the cop.

The dog began to sniff toward the tree, and Jack was terrified. The cop thought he was sniffing a path that went around the tree, to Jack's relief. The cop went around the tree and went that way.

Jack was in dangerous territory. He could be found and arrested at any moment. He needed to find that abandoned bookstore; it would be a great place to hide.

He had no choice but to monkey bar across the trees like a monkey. Jack couldn't set foot on the ground — it was too dangerous. His "monkey barring" reminded him of one of his wives, always acting like an animal. Yet that charmed him a little.

He monkey barred for a while and got tired. He fell onto the ground. He hurt his back.

Jack got up slowly, shocked and scared. After dusting himself off, he noticed he was looking straight into the eyes of a bear.

Jack was still. His heart was pounding with fear. He ran, which was a big mistake. The bear ran after him. He had to make it to the bookstore.

As he was running, he got caught in branches. The bear managed to bite off his right big toe. Jack screamed in pain, alerting the cops to his presence.

Jack then started uncontrollably shooting at the bear, making it bite off his other toes.

One of the cops saw the bear, but was shot by the uncontrollable gun of Jack.

Two down, Jack thought.

The bear was about to bite his leg off, but one of the cops shocked the bear with his taser.

Jack could hear the bear's cries, and he felt empathy. It was a feeling he hadn't felt in years. Not since his wife died.

The cops then arrested him.

"You're going away for a long time, Mr. Rourke."

They loaded him into the helicopter and gave Jack some toilet paper to cover his wounds. Flying the helicopter was his lawyer, Dr. John — he had been his client before.

"I'm sorry, but I can't keep lying to keep you from your punishment," said Dr. John. "BUT... there is someone who can solve all of your problems, and His name is Jesus."

II

Part Two

Born Again

5

Chapter 5

First Kiss

3 years earlier...

Jack picked up Maria to take her to eat at a Chinese buffet. Jack paid for both of them. "You didn't have to do that, you know?!" said Maria to Jack. "Yeah, but I did!" Replied Jack.

They got up and began picking things to eat. Maria got some fried squid, and Jack got hot wings.

"Well, I just wanted to tell you that I like you!" said Jack.

"Me too," replied Maria.

"I got fired from my job."

"Why?"

"I asked for a raise."

They both laughed. They then leaned over to kiss. When Maria kissed Jack, everything went in circles. Jack then heard a beeping

monitor; it was strange. He then passed out on the dinner table.

6

Chapter 6

The Day of Salvation

Jack woke up in a hospital bed. He had an IV in his arm and artificial toes. "Jack, we talked about it, your trial will be in a month," said Dr. John. "We're trying to get you released before your trial."

"He's safe to get up," said the Nurse. The Nurse unplugged the IV in Jack's arm and helped him get up.

Dr. John drove Jack to get his mugshot taken. "Remember how I said Jesus could solve all your problems?" asked Dr. John. "Yes, you know, I used to be a Christian." Replied Jack.

"That's surprising, considering this path you went down."

"Look, when my wife died, I blamed it on god, because it is his fault, he took her away from me!"

"It was her time, I guess. You shouldn't hate god for that, have you ever heard of the story of Job?"

"No"

"Well, I don't remember much of it. I'll wait until we get to jail to tell you, I can't focus on my bible and the road at the same time."

Soon, they arrived at the Jail. Jack had his mugshot taken, and then was taken to the detention center before they would decide if he would be on bail or not in 2 days.

Dr. John sat down with Jack before he left.

"So, tell me about the story of Job, please," asked Jack.

"My pleasure," replied Dr. John.

"So, what's it about?"

Dr. John opens his bible to Job Chapter 1, and reads aloud:

"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East. And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. So-"

"JUST GET TO THE POINT!!" Jack ordered.

"Ugh, fine," said Dr. John.

Dr. John had a study bible, so it had a summary for each book. He turned to the summary and read aloud:

"Job had a family, a nice family. Satan saw this as an opportunity to get him away from God, so he came to God, and said that Job only worships him because you bless him, and if he took everything from him, he would curse God's name. God said Satan could take things from him, but he can't touch his body. Satan did just that, and killed his family, and took all of

his material posse-"

"SPEAK FASTER!!" John interrupted again.

"Look, how am I going to explain anything to you when the only thing you care about are hot wings!" said Dr. John firmly. "Now you're going to sit hear and listen to this story, and apply it to your life!" Dr. John calmed down and then read aloud:

"Job was sad, and asked God 'why', but he never cursed God's name. His friends told him to curse God, but he didn't. Later, Satan was mad because he still worshiped God, so he went up to God again and asked him if he could touch his body, and God said he could, but he couldn't kill him. So-"

"How did he do it?" interrupted Jack.

"How did he do what?" replied Dr. John.

"How did he not curse God?"

"Because he truly loved him, and worshiped him. Here is an example: If your kids broke your favorite vase, would you curse them and hate them from now on?"

"I guess not..."

"Exactly, the child represents God, and you represent Job; you would still love them, but be upset about the vase."

"OH, I get it now!"

"Yes, anyway, where was I, oh right: So Job then has painful sores all over his body, but he never cursed God's name, when all of his friends had. Then, Satan was defeated once again, and Job got all of his prized possessions back."

Jack took a moment to comprehend the story he had just been told. Then he asked, "What does this have to do with me?"

"Well, you said you hated God because your wife died, right?"

"Yes, and?"

"And Job lost all of his things, and he didn't curse God, while you cursed God when you lost your things. Maybe Satan was

asking God to test you, and you failed that test, and let Satan win. A-"

"Dr. John, your time with the client is up," interrupted one of the officers.

Dr. John said bye and got up to leave, but not before he said one last thing to Jack on the way out:

"Remember, it's not too late to trust in God. It's only too late when you're dead. So, as the Bible says: 'For He says:

"In an acceptable time I have heard you,

And in the day of salvation I have helped you."

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'"

Jack was tired, and everything Dr. John just said had been repeating in his head; he needed sleep, but not before praying: "God, I'm sorry. I'm sorry for leaving you because my wife died. I deserve this sentence. I deserve everything that's coming to me. Please forgive me. I put my trust in You, Lord. Transform me into a better person. Amen."

7

Chapter 7

The Calm Before the Storm

2 years earlier...

Jack and Maria had just gotten married and were driving home. "Can we get some pizza, babe? I'm still hungry," said Maria. Jack agreed and drove over to the nearest Fiddle Greasers.

They got a pepperoni pizza and drove home. As they were eating, Maria told Jack, "Whatever you do, don't harden your heart. Stay the same God-loving man you have always been. Promise that."

"I promise," replied Jack. "I'll never end up like that King David guy!" "You know he turned back to God and was forgiven, right?" asked Maria. "Oh, right, how could I forget!" Replied

Jack as they both chuckled. "I want to go to the pool," said Maria. "Alright," replied Jack. They got into their car and went off.

Suddenly, a car rammed into Jack's car, launching both Jack and Maria out of the car. Jack hit his leg on a tree, breaking it as Jack screamed in pain.

Maria hit her head on the tree, falling on Jack, which killed her. Jack took a few minutes to process the pain, but then saw Maria's dead body.

"Wake up, please don't leave me, please..." said Jack as he cried. He heard ambulance beeps, and then Maria's corpse came to life and said, "Wake up." "YOU'RE OKAY!" replied Jack with joy. "No, wake up, it's lunch. WAKE UP!" screamed Maria, confusing Jack. Then everything around him began going around in circles, as the words "Wake up" began to repeat in Jack's head. Then everything went black.

8

Chapter 8

Witness and Wounds

Jack jolted awake faster than a cheetah and screamed. He saw a guard looking at him with displeasure. "Let me guess, bad dream?" said the Guard. "Yeah," replied Jack. "You're late to lunchtime, you must have been tired from your running and shooting," said the Guard.

Jack got up and went to the lunchroom. Jack started preaching the gospel with a man named Cole John, a man he had known from past offenses he had made. He was Dr. John's son.

"Hey Cole!" Jack said. "Hey, Jackie, what's up!" replied Cole.

"Don't ever call me that again."

"Okay, so what are you in here for this time?"

"Shooting two cops and armed robbery"

"Ay, that's my guy."

"No, that's not your guy."

"What do you mean?"

Jack was nervous; he was about to spread the truth. A few months ago, he would have laughed at the Bible. He took a deep breath and said:

"I have come back to God."

"Oh COME ON, that's that sky daddy my dad is always telling me about!" replied Cole.

"Well, I hope you come back to him too..."

"Okay, well, I'm still your friend!"

"Thanks"

"So, I never knew much about this sky daddy, tell me more about it."

"Well," Jack opened his bible to John 3:16-18, and read aloud:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

"Wow, that's deep," replied Cole.

"Well, it's the truth," replied Jack.

"Well, maybe-"

"Hey guys, look at the preacher boy over here, he thinks the sky daddy is gonna bail him out!" interrupted Joshua, another inmate, mocking Jack.

Jack clenched his fists and said, "Shut the heck up before I-" he stopped when he remembered his wife saying, "Forgive others, as Jesus has forgiven you, and don't curse anyone's name." "I forgive you," said Jack. Joshua and his friends laughed and then left.

"I might wanna try this Christian thing, but I don't want my

friends to judge me," said Cole

"Well, would you rather have eternal joy and peace or have your friends judge you and be temporarily lonely on earth?"

"Fair."

"Jack, the judge is ready," said one of the guards. "The judge has a meeting tomorrow, so he will decide your bail now."

"Good Luck, Jack!" said Cole. "Thanks!" replied Jack.

Jack sat down nervously. *Don't be nervous,* Cole thought. *This is just the bail decision.* Dr. John entered the room and sat next to Jack."Order, order, ORDER!" exclaimed the judge, hitting his gavel on the table. "Today we will be deciding the bail for Jack Rourke."

"Well, uh-" Jack replied.

"SILENCE!!" Ordered the Judge.

"Yes, your honor."

"So, putting Jack on bail could be dangerous; he could rob more stores and kill more cops. I'd say Jack shouldn't be on bail, what do you think, Jack?"

"Well, I shouldn't be on bail, I agree with you."

"Okay, and Dr. John, what do you think?"

"I think he should get bail."

"Well, Jack requested he not be put on bail, so that means Jack will be in Jail for the next month," Said the Judge as he banged his gavel against the table.

Jack was taken back to his cell. "Why did you ask to be in jail?" asked Dr. John. "Because I deserved it," replied Jack. "I am still free either way, I have Jesus." "That's the spirit!" replied Dr. John. "Now, open your bible and turn to-" Dr. John said as he was interrupted. "Your time is up, Dr. John." Dr. John said bye and left the room. Jack was alone now.

Jack was about to go to sleep when suddenly Joshua and his

friends pounced on Jack.

"Can your sky daddy save you now?" said Joshua, mockingly. Jack didn't know what to do, so he kicked Joshua in the groin. Before Joshua could do anything back, the guards had to pull Joshua and his friends off of Jack. The Guard asked if he was okay, and Jack was fine. Jack prayed: "God, please give me strength, please, I love you, Jesus. Amen." and went to sleep. He didn't preach for the next 2 months.

9

Chapter 9

Ten Wives, Ten Lies

2 years earlier...

Jack was at Maria's funeral, crying. "And before we end this funeral, would anyone like to say anything?" asked the preacher. Jack raised his hand and exclaimed, "THIS IS GOD'S FAULT, CURSE YOU, GOD, WHY DID YOU TAKE HER FROM ME, WHY?!" Everyone was shocked, but before anyone could say anything, Jack stormed out of the church. He stepped into his car, furious.

When he got home, he set up a campfire and burned his bible as he was cursing and swearing at God. All that was left were burnt bits of paper and ashes.

Jack cried himself to sleep.

Over the next few months, Jack began dating and marrying

multiple girlfriends and wives to cope with his anger and sadness. Their names were Fran, Kenny, Ashley, Ashlyn, Angel, Willow, Ellie, Kelby, Kelly, and Caroline. Soon, he had a huge mansion and multiple wives hidden from each other in different sections of the house. One in the basement, one in the attic, etc. Jack was still not satisfied, so he drank a lot. He began robbing gas stations, banks, and shoplifting.

A few months later, Jack accidentally invited all of the wives to dinner, and they found out Jack's secret. They all divorced him soon after that.

Jack had become a cruel, bad man. A few weeks after that, he decided to rob a gas station for hot wings, and as he got into his car, he blacked out.

10

Chapter 10

In Chains, Yet Free

2 months later...

Jack was woken up by a guard, much to his displeasure. He was sleeping well. It was another dreamless sleep. Ever since he had the dream that was a replay of events before he robbed the gas station, he has had dreamless sleep.

"You are going to be tried today, but not before your medical check." Said the Guard to Jack. Jack had gotten into a fight with Joshua a week ago, and Joshua smashed his head against the wall, damaging his frontal lobe. He was going to die in two weeks.

Jack reluctantly got up slowly. He has been tired all the time since his injury. He remembered every moment of the fight.

Joshua had him cornered, and John kicked him in the groin. Then, Joshua grabbed his head and smashed it against the wall, knocking Jack out. Joshua then took his bible and threw it in the toilet, making it unreadable. The maximum-security prison was full, so they had to put Joshua on parole, which caused controversy everywhere around the city. Mothers were extra protective of their children, the poor stayed hidden, and lots of people went to the underground storm shelter (it was a big shelter). A dangerous man who went to jail for murdering 10 people was free. No one was safe. Jack also remembered how shocked he was when the doctor told him he would die soon, but his faith gave him hope. Jack thought about it like this: in a few weeks, Jack was going to be let into eternal paradise with his Lord Jesus Christ.

Jack didn't want to spend the last moments of his life cooped up in a cold, dark prison. He wanted to apologize to the cops' parents. He wanted to go to the pool, see his friends, he wanted to enjoy his last two weeks of life. He needed to share the gospel with his friends who didn't know God. His friends were on the broad path that led to destruction.

Jack entered the medical room slowly, then sat down. The Doctor gave him a CT scan and took his blood. The Doctor put the blood sample into the machine as well. His CT scan showed his damaged frontal lobe. It had a piece missing from the top-right corner. A surgery was required because the broken piece was crushing a blood vessel. "Well, it doesn't look good," said the doctor. "He might even die sooner, but he will be able to attend court today," "Come on, Mr. Rourke," said the guard.

"Will I b-b-be able to w-w-write letters to my f-f-friends?" asked Jack (he now had a speech impediment due to the injury). "Yes, you may," replied the guard.

Jack entered the courtroom, terrified. Before, he didn't care if he was in jail because of Jesus, but now he wanted to spread the gospel with his unsaved loved ones in person. He was going to try to at least be on parole. He might even have to lie.

Dr. John entered the courtroom soon after and sat next to Jack. Once the jury sat down, the trial began.

"Order, order, order, order, ORDER!" exclaimed the judge, hitting his gavel against the table. "Today, we will be hearing the case of Jack Rourke, who is being accused of armed robbery, resisting arrest, and manslaughter. Mr. Rourke, what do you plead?"

"N-n-not guilty, your honor," replied Jack

"Hm, but last time you said you deserved everything, implying that you know you're guilty, what do you have to say in his defense, Dr. John?"

Dr. John looked at Jack and could see how scared he was. He wanted to live his last two weeks preaching in fresh air, not in a cold, damp prison.

"Uh, he was threatened to be killed by Joshua to say that, your honor," lied Dr. John, as the jury gasped loudly.

"Hm, I see. Well, we may have to bring in some witnesses...," said the judge. "Prosecutor, bring in Joshua, please," ordered the judge. "Yes, your honor," replied the prosecutor.

About 30 minutes later, Joshua was brought in. "So, Joshua, you are being accused of threatening to kill Jack if he didn't say he deserved his punishment, is this true?" asked the judge.

"No, your honor." Replied Joshua.

"This case is going to be harder than I thought. Bring in Cole John, please," ordered the judge.

Another 30 minutes passed, and then Cole was brought in.

"Cole, did Joshua threaten to kill Jack if he didn't say he

deserved his punishment?" asked the judge.

"No, your honor, he just made fun of us for talking about God," replied Cole.

"Jack, are they telling the truth?" asked the judge.

Jack started feeling guilty. He had lied, which was a sin. It was time to tell the truth.

"Yes, your honor," said Jack, as the jury gasped.

"So, you're guilty?" replied the judge.

"Yes, your honor."

"Well, I hereby sentence you to life in prison," said the judge as he slammed his gavel on the table. The guards took Jack and took him away. Dr. John smiled at Jack, and Jack smiled back, and then the guards took Jack out of view.

III

Part Three

Transformed

11

Chapter 11

A Failed Ministry

Jack woke up feeling sad and proud at the same time. He was sad because he would spend the last 2 weeks of his life in jail. The maximum security prison was supposedly full, but Jack was sent there anyway, which was weird. He was in the medical wing now, due to his injuries. He couldn't eat in the lunchroom and had to eat in the medical wing. He didn't want to be isolated; he wanted to be with his friends and share the gospel.

Jack made a plan; he was going to sneak into the cells and spread the gospel, and then escape to start a ministry, but how? There are guards at every corner. Jack wrote his plan on a large piece of paper in the cell, which had an old inmate's escape plan on the back. Jack was tempted to follow that escape plan, but he needed to convert the inmates first.

His plan was simple: Wait until lunchtime, and then ask to use the restroom. Then the guards will follow him, but they walk

pretty slowly. Then, when he enters the restroom, he will climb through the ventilation system, which connects to every prison cell. But Jack wasn't trying to escape, so he would hover over the vent exit on the ceiling of the cell, and drop a paper that had bible verses on it. Then, he will make it to Cole's cell, which is the last. Then, Cole will hold him up into the vent so he can climb back. Then, Jack would exit through the vent outside and escape so he could share the gospel with his unsaved friends outside prison.

Once Jack was done sketching the plan, he went back to sleep, because he was tired, and a nice sleep he had.

A few hours later, Jack was woken up for lunch. It was time to execute the plan. Jack had his papers, memory, and everything else he needed.

Jack ate some of the lunch. It was hot wings. Even with his brain messed up, he still enjoyed hot wings. *You know, if you think about it, the wings brought me to Jesus,* thought Jack. *God really does work in mysterious ways.*

After a few minutes of eating, it was time for action. He left his plate half-eaten, so he didn't look suspicious. "H-h-hey, m-m-may I use the r-r-restroom?" asked Jack. "Yes, you may," replied the guard.

Jack entered the restroom. He had to be quick because the guard was standing outside the door. He actually did use the restroom and then crawled up the vents.

Jack was claustrophobic, but he had to do this. It was what he was called to do by God. He then crawled until he reached Colin's cell, and dropped the papers. The papers said:

Isiah 35:5: But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was

upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

John 3:16-18: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Acts 4:12: Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Romans 10:9: that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 1:16: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Acts 10:43: To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.

Romans 4:23-5:1: Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Ephesians 2:8-10: For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Each paper had a different verse on it, and Jack climbed and dropped each paper into each cell. Jack eventually made it to Cole's cell.

Jack gave him the paper, Cole picked him up, and Jack got back into the vent, but he was facing the opposite direction, so he could climb back outside now.

There was a vent sector that led straight outside. This was it, Jack was about to be free and start a ministry, at least until he was brought back here.

Right when Jack opened the vent, the alarm sounded. It was a trap. He still made an effort to jump out, but the ground was electric. Jack was in pain for a few seconds, then passed out.

12

Chapter 12

The Storm of Righteousness

Jack awoke, confused and in pain. He heard a heart monitor beeping next to him, and it was beeping slowly. Eventually, it was beeping at a normal rate. "Mr. Rourke, you shortened your remaining time to 6 days. I hope you're happy with your choice," said a guard, sarcastically. Jack thought it was weird that the guards were taking pleasure in his torment. He wasn't going to give up, though.

Jack proceeded to get up as the nurse took the IVs out of his body. Jack was then led to his cell. Jack thought it was suspicious that he was in the maximum security prison when it was allegedly full, and that the guards were taking pleasure in his torment. He needed to find that out. He asked God for strength and began his investigation.

Jack was about to write down his plan when suddenly, he overheard a conversation between the guards. He focused.

"Alright, I know for a fact Jack is going to try to escape and tell everyone about his so-called God, so what should we do?"

"Well, I'm not sure. We could set another trap,"

"And what trap would that be?"

"We know how much Jack likes sharing his imaginary God around the lunchroom, so we could put him in an isolation room, and he will go insane and die slowly."

"Nah, that is a good idea, but that will make us look bad."

"Why don't we just sentence him to death?"

"Boss wants him to die slowly in this prison, remember?"

"Right..."

"How about we lock him in the isolation room!"

"THAT'S WHAT I SAID!"

Jack was shocked by the information he just received. It all made sense now; they wanted him to suffer for his faith. He had to come up with a plan quickly. But he didn't have time, because the guards knocked on his prison door.

"Hey, we talked with the boss, and you will be locked in the isolation room. We will give you food every now and then, but you'll stay in there for the rest of the sentence," said the guard.

"Yes, sir," replied Jack.

Jack walked down the hallway with the guards. He was nervous. He felt like using his strength and knocking the guards out. He couldn't take this injustice anymore. Jack slowly got more and more angry, but before he did anything, the weather alarm went off.

"May we have your attention, please?" said the alarm. "There is

a tornado heading straight for the Grace Falls Maximum Security prison. Please find the nearest storm shelter and stay there until the storm has moved away." The guards instantly ran away, leaving Jack there. Jack had to make it to the storm shelter.

As he was running, a legal document flew in his face, much to his annoyance. The paper read:

"List of Christian prisoners (and those on parole):
Cole John
Jack Rourke
Joshua Ridges
Olivia Rose
Troy Rosa

We plan to break these prisoners so badly that they finally reject Christ. Then I will become president and bring back old-fashioned, painful, drawn-out corporal punishment that we will inflict on those who love Christ until they either die or curse his name. I call it 'PROJECT: NERO', and I hope the project will be successful – Peter Matthews."

Jack didn't recognize the name at first, but he soon realized Peter Matthews was the new head of the prison system. Jack was shocked, but glad to be informed of this. It also told him that Cole and Joshua had converted, which made him happy. Jack made it to the storm shelter, waited, and spread the gospel with people and converted them. Then he realized that he was free now. He had already just escaped prison. He thanked the Lord for the storm, because it set him free. But he was tired, and he couldn't go outside in the storm, so he took a nap.

Meanwhile, Peter Matthews was in his home's basement.

But there was a window in the basement; it wasn't a fully underground basement-half of it was underground, half of it was exposed. Peter lived on a hill. He forgot to close the windows, though, so one of Jack's papers that he wrote earlier flew in his face. He read it aloud:

"Romans 10:9: that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Peter spat on it and threw it out. "I listen to no God!" Peter scoffed. Suddenly, lightning struck his house, setting it on fire. Peter had to escape. He quickly ran up and made it out of the house safely, but with a minor burn. He was running to the storm shelter when the storm stopped. The weather alarm came back on, "Tornado has left Grace Falls, and is heading towards Paris, Texas. Stay safe."

Jack left the storm shelter and felt the sunshine, real sunshine, on his skin. He hadn't felt this in months. But his joy didn't last long, as he was arrested and taken back to prison. He thanked God for everything today, and had hope that he might escape, and if he doesn't, that his unsaved loved ones might find God. Jack went to sleep peacefully in his cell.

13

Chapter 13

Peter Matthews

Jack slept in; he was exhausted. Meanwhile, Peter Matthews was talking with his guards...

"What happened yesterday bothers me," said Peter. "Not just Mr. Rourke escaping, but the verse that flew in my face, and my house burning down. That's why I called y'all to this apartment, I am renting this place for now until I get things sorted out."

"Why would a bible verse bother you? I thought you hated the Bible," asked one of the guards.

"Because it happened right before my house was struck. I spat on the paper and threw it out, and blasphemed this so-called God. It feels like it's not a coincidence that my house was struck directly after. It feels like a warning, and I am kind of scared for my so-called soul."

"Well, it was probably just a coincidence, there are no souls,

or Gods, now focus on Project Nero, it's almost ready to be executed," replied Guard #1.

"Well, I don't know, shouldn't you be worried? What if you're wrong and there is a God?" replied Guard #2.

"UGH, IT TAKES EVERY OUNCE OF SELF CONTROL NOT TO FIRE YOU AND 'THROW YOU INTO THE FIERY PIT!!!'" exclaimed Peter, mocking the Bible. Guard #1 and Peter laughed together for a moment.

"Look, let's just focus on Project Nero. Is the torture room almost ready?" asked Peter.

"Yes, it just needs some painting, and it's done," replied Guard #1.

"Alright, so like day after tomorrow?"

"Yes"

"Well, that Mr. Rourke guy is gonna love his new fate!"

"So, what devices are there?" asked Guard #2

"Well, we got the bed with chains, and a bear that I found in the woods. It looked like it was hit with a taser by a cop," replied Peter. "It likes biting people's toes off."

"So, what verse flew in your face?" asked Guard #2

"I think it was, like Acts 10:5 or something," replied Peter.

Guard #2 got his phone out and he secretly had a Bible app on there, so he looked up Acts 10:5 and read aloud:

"Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter."

"That's not the verse at all, it was maybe, like Romans 9:10," Said Peter.

Guard #2 looked up Romans 9:10 and read aloud:

"For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."

Peter started getting mad. But before he could do anything, Dr. John entered the room. Peter changed the subject.

"Oh, hey Dr. John, what's up?" asked Peter, nervously.

"Hey, may I see Mr. Rourke?" asked Dr. John.

"Oh, sure, we were just talking about him," replied Peter.

Peter reluctantly led Dr. John to Jack. Peter's hatred for Jack grew when he saw him sleeping peacefully. Peter left Dr. John with Jack.

Dr. John woke Jack up. "Look, this is the last time I will get to see you before you die, and I want you to know that I'm proud of you for telling the truth, even if it cost you your freedom," said Dr. John. "What do you mean, I am free!" replied Jack. "That's the spirit!!!" exclaimed Dr. John.

Dr. John read the passage aloud, stopping at moments to emphasize key parts:

"They could find no fault in him... unless it was concerning the law of his God."

He glanced at Jack. "Sound familiar?"

Then he continued: "...Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."

And finally, Daniel's words: "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths..."

"God delivered Daniel," said Dr. John, closing his Bible. "He can deliver you, too."

"Yeah, I know, I think God was the reason for the storm yesterday," replied Jack. "Really, how so?" asked Dr. John. "Well, they were going to lock me into the isolation room for my faith, and then the storm happened, and then-" Jack said as he was interrupted. "Wait, they WHAT?!" asked Dr. John, jumping out of his seat with rage.

"Yeah, they-"

"This is an outrage, this prison is discriminating and going against the constitution, stay here, Jack."

Dr. John stormed to Peter's office. "HEY, did you try to lock Mr. Rourke into the isolation room for his faith?!" asked Dr. John. "Why, yes, I did tell my guards to do that!" replied Peter. "This is terrible, the Constitution clearly says that we have freedom of religion!" exclaimed Dr. John. "I am going to tell the government right away!"

Dr. John tried to storm out of the room, but the door was locked. "Hey, not so fast. I think we will have to kill you now, we can't just have you living to tell the tale. Guards, ARREST HIM!!!" Ordered Peter. "You can't do this, I'll just snitch in cour-" Dr. John said as the guards put a washrag in his mouth, gagging him. Peter laughed as Dr. John was taken away. "We will have you executed tomorrow!" exclaimed Peter with joy.

Dr. John prayed in his mind as he was taken away.

14

Chapter 14

Endure to the End

Jack awoke from his sleep, still tired as usual. A guard knocked on his prison door, jolting him up quicker. "You have been invited to attend the execution of Bradley John, nicknamed 'Dr. John, due to you being one of Dr. John's clients," read the guard. "WHAT, but why is he being executed?!" asked Jack. The guard got his paper back out and read: "Bradley John is being executed for murdering Peter Matthews." Jack knew something wasn't right. Dr. John was a kind man. He wasn't capable of something that bad. "The execution is in 2 hours," said the guard as he left. Jack had to save him.

He knew that he was probably having his last meal right now, so he needed to either escape and tell the authorities, or just sneak Dr. John out. Jack realized that the vent above his cell was there, and realized that he could use furniture as elevation so he could reach the vents. It turns out that the sink was movable, but

needed to be unscrewed from the wall first. He looked around for a screwdriver, and then realized that the screw was inside of the sink's wood, so he needed an axe. When he realized he couldn't get any of those things, he just used the sink to jump outward and grabbed the vent edge. Jack managed to climb into the vent, but cut his hand in the process (The electric ground from a few days ago made his skin weaker).

Jack had some tissues in his pocket, so he wrapped them around the wound to prevent blood loss. It hurt his hand to climb, so he used one hand to climb, which exhausted him. Eventually, he made it to Dr. John's cell. There was no guard in the room, so Jack exited the vent.

"Jack, what in the tarnation are you doing?!" exclaimed Dr. John. "Saving you," replied Jack

"You don't need to do that, go back to your cell before the guards notice you're missing."

"Look, did you really murder Peter Matthews?"

"What, no, what made you think that?"

Jack handed Dr. John the invitation.

"Well, I'll be!" exclaimed Dr. John.

"Did you?" asked Jack.

"No, I said that I would tell the government that they are discriminating against Christians, and they will kill me, so I can't now."

"Look, they are gonna kill and 'break' Christians, I-"

Jack heard the footsteps of a guard and quickly hid underneath the table.

"We came to let you know that you have 15 minutes to finish your meal," Said the guard. "Yes, sir," replied Dr. John.

Once the guard left, Jack emerged from his hiding spot. "Look, I will escape and tell the authorities," said Jack. "Look, if you do,

please don't get yourself killed. You have been my favorite client. Thanks for everything, Jack," replied Dr. John. Jack nodded and smiled, and then left the room.

Jack made it to the exit door, but the alarm went off. "ESCAPING PRISONER, ESCAPING PRISONER," exclaimed the alarm. The door still opened, surprising Jack. So he left and ran to his home. He hoped that he had left his door unlocked before he went and robbed the store. He tried to open the door, but it was locked. Suddenly, he heard police sirens behind him. The cops arrested Jack and brought him back to his cell, locking the vent.

"Lord, please protect Dr. John, and if he dies, allow him into your kingdom, where he will experience eternal joy in paradise, and please give me strength, but give Dr. John more strength, Amen." Prayed Jack. Jack went to sleep.

Jack was woken up two hours later. He was taken to witness Dr. John's execution. He cried a lot. Dr. John was being executed with a lethal injection. They allowed Dr. John to say his last words, which were, "John, stay strong, and don't ever leave God. Endure to the end, for me, for God."

Jack watched in horror as they injected the first shot into Dr. John's arm. Then the second. Then the third. And before he knew it, Dr. John was dead.

Jack cried himself to sleep that night. Before he went to sleep, he heard Peter's footsteps. He thought they were just a regular guard's footsteps walking by, so he fell asleep.

15

Chapter 15

Project Nero

Jack woke up in a blood-red painted room. It smelled like rotten eggs. Jack was still half-asleep until Peter entered the room. "SURPRISE!!!" Exclaimed Peter, waking Jack up. Jack realized he was tied to a bed. "Where am I?!" asked Jack. "You're in my hell!" said Peter. Peter had multiple syringes that only served to cause excruciating pain. "You know, growing up, I studied Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, a leader whom I almost worship. He killed Christians. I have devoted my life to continuing his legacy. Soon, I will overthrow the government and torture Christians until they curse God or die! Dr. John almost ratted me out, so I had him killed, and I faked my death," explained Peter. "And how do you plan to do that?" asked Jack. "Well, you're about to find out... RIGHT NOW!!!" exclaimed Peter as he injected the first syringe into Jack's arm.

Jack screamed as he was experiencing excruciating pain. The

pain was so unbearable that he gnashed his teeth until he almost broke a tooth.

Meanwhile, Joshua was walking by the prison when he heard Jack's screams. He knew it was probably Peter torturing Jack, so he had to sneak into the prison.

Joshua thought it was best if he called the authorities, but the cops had seen him. *I have to get Dr. John* Thought Joshua, not knowing he was dead.

"Hey, you tryna break in? Well, that can be arranged," Said the cop. Joshua jumped over the electric ground and climbed up the wall. Eventually, he climbed into the vent, but the cop shot his foot. He was still able to climb in, though.

Meanwhile, Peter was getting ready to inject the next syringe; this one would cause Jack to feel like he was drowning. "You don't have to do this, accept him now before it's too late," said Jack. "Oh, but I want to, and no, I don't need to accept any God," replied Peter as he injected the next syringe. *Please, don't let me curse You, God,* Jack prayed in his mind.

Joshua made it to Dr. John's cell (he knew he was arrested but didn't know he was dead), but Dr. John wasn't there, so Joshua ran through the hallway to deal with it himself. He found an axe and broke through the door, and saw Peter and Jack.

"Leave him alone!" exclaimed Joshua, as he threw the axe at Peter. Peter ducked, and the handle hit Jack's head, knocking him out. *Good, he's not feeling pain anymore,* Thought Joshua. *Now time to take out the trash.*

Joshua went to the back of the room and grabbed the axe. As Peter was about to inject the syringe that woke him up, Joshua struck his stomach with the axe.

Peter bled out, but was still insane enough to fight. Peter grabbed a gun and shot at Joshua multiple times. Joshua dodged

most of them, but two got his arm. Joshua had to grab the gun.

Peter shot Joshua's four limbs, knocking him to the ground. Peter aimed the gun at Joshua's head. "Checkmate," said Peter, with joy. Suddenly, one of Jack's papers that had a bible verse on it flew in Peter's face. It read: "Romans 10:9: that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Peter read the verse and froze. "Maybe I should repent... Maybe... " His eyes narrowed. "No. I won't. I hate your God, I hate you all. Get ready to die, Joshua!"

Just as Peter was about to shoot, he gasped, clutched his chest, and fell to the floor. He had just had a heart attack. Peter was now dead, ending Project: Nero once and for all. Joshua prayed for Peter, "God, if there is any hope left for his soul, I leave that to you," and then passed out.

Later, some guards found the two in the room. They brought Joshua and Peter's bodies to the hospital and took Jack back to his cell. They tried everything they could, but Joshua died.

Jack, still knocked out, was left sleeping in his cell. He had 2 days left.

16

Chapter 16

The Final Sermon

Jack jolted awake. He wasn't in Peter's torture chamber; he was in his cell. He was confused. The only thing he could remember before waking up was a faint memory of Joshua throwing an axe at Peter, him dodging it, and it knocking Jack out. As he was waking up, another storm happened.

Jack tried to escape his cell, but couldn't. All of the prison doors were suddenly unlocked due to an object flying and falling onto a button that unlocks all doors. These doors included the cells. God was allowing Jack to give one last sermon before his demise.

Jack ran through the hallway and went straight through the lunchroom. But a paper flew in his face. It was a medical document. It read:

"Patient: Jack Rourke

Condition: (This part was cut out by somebody)

RECENT LOG:

The patient was knocked out with an axe handle. His remaining lifespan was 2 days, but now he will die later this evening, around 12:00 PM."

Jack was shocked. He was going to die in a few hours. He realized God caused the storm again so he could give one last sermon to the prisoners. He had to hurry.

Eventually, Jack made it to the lunchroom. Some prisoners were hiding, others weren't afraid to die.

"Listen, this s-s-storm is G-g-god's doing. H-h-he is allowing me to give one last sermon," said Jack. "God, what shall I preach?" asked Jack. Suddenly, some pieces of a Bible flew in Jack's face. All of them were a specific verse cut out by somebody. Jack read them aloud:

"that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. – Romans 10:9

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. - Romans 10:12"

Jack then saw the last paper and read aloud:

"There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that

his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God. - John 3:1-21"

The crowd clapped, some keeled, some professed their faith. It was 11:59. Jack spoke his last words: "Go, go and spread this gospel, convert and baptize people in the name of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. God Bless." Jack then drew his last breath and fell to the floor.

17

Chapter 17

Eternal Life

Jack woke up confused. There were clouds everywhere and golden buildings. He got up and saw the Lord God himself. God's face was so beautiful, it was beyond comprehension. "Hello, my child," said God. "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." "But, how, I don't understand, I was a terrible person," replied Jack.

"You were, but you turned back to me, and had faith in me."

"Oh God, I love you!"

"I love you, too, son."

God then opened the gates of heaven, and Jack entered. Jack

then saw Maria. They hugged each other, laughed together with joy, and went off into the golden city.

18

Epilogue

A Spiritual Legacy

It has been 20 years since Jack's death. The government discovered hidden papers in the prison that explicitly stated they wanted to kill Jack because of his faith — and that they hired Joshua to injure him, promising release on parole in return. They also uncovered that Peter had faked his death using Dr. John's false accusation and the execution that followed for Peter's supposed murder. But due to divine intervention from the Lord — a heart attack — Peter died the next day, just before he could kill Joshua. The guards claimed it was Peter's body from Dr. John's supposed crime, but they knew the truth.

That isn't the only thing that happened today. Five years ago, Cole John was released from prison. Today, he became the new warden — and he plans to continue his father's work: spreading the gospel to inmates, ending the death penalty, and doing God's will.

After Peter's death, his son, Jacob Matthews, replaced him

and carried on his father's ways — until a few weeks ago, when he died of cancer. A temporary warden, Paul Matthews, took over until Cole John was selected by the government to take the role permanently.

When people moved into Joshua's house today, they found his diary. In it, he wrote about how he came to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It truly demonstrates how Jesus can transform someone's life.

Look at Jack — he came to faith, preached his faith, and died for it. Jack, Maria, Dr. John, and Joshua are in heaven now, experiencing eternal joy and peace. Joshua's diary is also preserved and published as a book called *Prosecutor Transformed*. Jack and Joshua's story is a powerful example of how even the worst can be forgiven.